

PUBLIC STATEMENT OF PENNY ROYCE-ROGERS

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MS. ROYCE-ROGERS: Good afternoon and thank you for having this public hearing in Nevada.

My name is Penny Royce-Rogers, and I am speaking solely as a citizen. I have lived here for 30 years and raised my two daughters here and have been very proud of living in Nevada. I grew up in Washington, D.C. My father worked for the government his entire professional career. So I saw Washington from that end.

And it was interesting growing up. We always made the inaugural parades, and we saw how Washington worked.

For the last 30 years I have worked with children and families in Nevada. I am not a scientist. I am not a nuclear anti-activist.

I was at a meeting last night, a wonderful book group meeting where it was announced that this might be the last time that Nevada citizens could speak to this issue. Now having worked with children, my entire career, I have spoken on the issue and testified many times on behalf of children, but I never really got into this. But suddenly last night it hit me, maybe I'd better because our children could be very affected by the decisions that you're making.

I have listened today the entire time. I came early to hear the questions and answers. As an activist citizen who happens to have a computer, I got on the website this morning, and I went to Yucca Mountain, and I went to DOE, and I would like to commend you first for the excellent program that you have that's called the environmental management science program, where this year you have 66 new projects and are spending \$43 million with scientists, with your scientific labs, with nonprofits, I presume, to help find a solution to this incredible problem of what to do with our nuclear waste. So that there is some money being spent from our hard earned tax dollars looking at other alternatives besides Yucca Mountain.

I was very excited to read that, and I certainly commend you. And I would say, please try to put more of the millions of dollars into that.

I can only say as a citizen that I am opposed to this. I have lived in Nevada for 30 years, and I really think we have done our share in the whole nuclear program with the Nevada Test Site.

I can tell you personally having worked with children, I worked for a number of years with a

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program called the HAPY program, which stands for Home Activities for Parents and Youngsters. And I helped evolve that program. It is a state program for young children with disabilities from birth to three. Initially we received federal monies, and then it eventually became a state program.

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And as I helped administer that and went out to families, many of them in Southern Nevada, I saw family after family in Southern Nevada with children with disabilities. All kinds of strange syndromes, all kinds of disabilities. And I remember we would come back to the office and say, why are there so many children here? And how can we help these families?

It was really a tragic thing to see. We didn't have the funds to really study whether this was necessarily an outgrowth of the site testing that's been done in Nevada for so long. I do know that there's radioactive dust in many homes down there.

I was interested to hear the anthropologist talk about some of the studies that have been done in terms of disease and cancer related concerns in Southern Nevada. I also know in the fallout area in the wind prone area of Utah, there's been a much higher incidence of children with disabilities and handicaps.

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I guess as a citizen here, I would like to say please consider other alternatives. I'm absolutely appalled that for 13 years now you haven't. I would encourage you to spend millions more on other resources besides perhaps just a nuclear repository.

I think if we have the amazing scientists that developed the nuclear problems, the nuclear bombs that we have, we must also have the amazing scientists that can really find us some answers besides just Yucca Mountain.

Thank you, though, for coming here and letting us express our opinions.

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